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Dual Pathways to Engage in ‘Silent Marches’ Against Violence: Moral Outrage, Moral Cleansing and Modes of Identification

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ABSTRACT

A survey ($N = 120$) examined variables that contribute to the willingness of people to engage in silent marches against violence in the Netherlands. As argued in Sacred Value Protection Model (SVPM) of Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, and Lerner (2000) and moral mandate theory of Skitka, Bauman, and Sargis (2005), moral threats that are triggered by violent incidents, may indeed drive people to protest against such incidents. Our findings indicated dual pathways to such protests, that are all associated with reactive, angry empathic concerns. These concerns involve people's outrageous, punitive reactions towards offenders on behalf of the victims. These concerns are directly or indirectly related to people's participation intentions. That is, they directly influence the participation intention variable, or indirectly, through (re-)establishing the belief in a just-world, or through more fearful, self-directed moral cleansing reactions. These latter reactions aim at reinforcing community-shared moral standards. Copyright © 2007 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Key words: affiliation; identification; just-world beliefs; moral responses; sacred values; senseless violence

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, a new phenomenon has arisen in Dutch society: the participation of residents in so-called ‘Silent Marches’ against violence. These marches are often held in remembrance of innocent victims, who found their death through the use of ‘senseless’ violence. Such marches do not restrict themselves to the Netherlands. For instance, on 23 April 2006, an estimated 80 000 citizens gathered in Brussels (Belgium) to massively demonstrate against the murder of a 17-year-old boy, who was stabbed to death for an mp3-player at Brussels’ Central Station.

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No study has hitherto been conducted to examine people's reasons for engaging in such demonstrations. The current study aims to partially fill this gap. Our research was guided by the Sacred Value Protection Model (SVPM, e.g. Tetlock, 2003; Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, & Lerner, 2000), moral mandate theory (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005) and by the research of Lodewijx and co-workers on 'senseless' violence (Lodewijx, DeKwaadsteniet, & Nijstad, 2005; Lodewijx, DeKwaadsteniet, van Zomeren, & Petterson, 2005; Lodewijx, Wildschut, Nijstad, Savenije, & Smit, 2001; van Zomeren & Lodewijx, 2005). These latter studies examined the role of just-world and different identification processes and offender-related punitive reactions in response to violent incidents.

Protection of sacred values

According to Tetlock et al.'s (2000) SVPM, people often act to protect sacred values from being attacked. A sacred value can be defined 'as any value that a moral community implicitly or explicitly treats as possessing infinite or transcendental significance that precludes comparisons, trade-offs, or indeed any other mingling with bounded or secular values' (*ibid.*, p. 853). Examples of such sacred-secular value trade-offs are the buying and selling of human body parts for medical transplant operations; surrogate motherhood contracts; selling babies for adoption purposes; or killing someone without provocation or for money (or, we add, for an mp3-player, as happened in Brussels). The SVPM argues that, whenever individuals perceive trade-offs between sacred values and utilitarian, economic or other functionalist (secular) motives, they tend to adopt a '*moralist-theologian metaphor*' rather than a '*functionalist metaphor*' as a way to cope with such situations (*ibid.*, p. 853). This replacement propels people 'to protect their private selves and public identities from moral contamination by impure thoughts and deeds' (*ibid.*). This protection is achieved by means of two motivated responses: *Moral outrage* and *moral cleansing*. Moral outrage is a response associated with a desire to denigrate the offender of the sacred value and with strengthening the moral boundaries to future threats. It also involves the expression of the limits of what is morally and socially acceptable to people, and what is not. Moral cleansing involves value affirmation, that is (re-)affirming one's commitment to the sacred value and one's solidarity with the moral community. Moral outrage is more strongly related to anger and may involve, among others, punitive reactions directed at offenders (Tetlock, 2003; Tetlock et al.). We included such punitive reactions in our study and they will be outlined in later sections. Value affirming, moral cleansing responses are more strongly associated with fear (Skitka, Baumann, & Mullen, 2004) and this response is more self-directed compared to the moral outrage reaction.

Moral mandates and silent marches

According to the SVPM and moral mandate theory, moral convictions provide an exclusive motivation for communal protest, because they are experienced as non-negotiable, unwavering and absolute 'sacred truths' (Skitka et al., 2005). The theories contend that people are strongly motivated to defend their moral convictions against any persons or situations that go against their moral convictions, such as, we argue, incidents involving 'senseless' violence. According to moral mandate theory, the strength of moral convictions to drive collective protest is different from the more classic explanations of this

phenomenon. Van Zomeren (2006) summarizes these explanations. They may refer to perceptions of instrumentality such as the group's efficacy to bring about social change, as proposed in resource mobilization theory. They may relate to perceptions of collective injustice, as put forward in relative deprivation theory. They may further relate to group actions directed to establish, maintain or enhance a positive social identity, as argued by social identity theory. According to Skitka et al., the model of coping with moral threat constitutes a new avenue to study collective protest. On these grounds, we expect that—in the face of violent incidents that evoke moral threat—moral-punitive beliefs will constitute an important underlying dimension in people's decisions to engage in silent marches against violence. Besides these morality-based processes, additional variables may also contribute to people's participation intentions. We derived these variables from the senseless violence studies conducted by Lodewijkx and co-workers.

Just-world beliefs

Tetlock (2003) contends that people's absolute and inviolable commitment to justice constitutes another sacred value. Whenever people perceive transgressions of this value their reactions will become 'outrageous' (*ibid.*, p. 320). Such reactions may be triggered when people feel that the violence committed upon an innocent victim is perceived to be utterly unjust. Just-world theory (e.g. Hafer & Bègue, 2005) assumes that the threatening notion of living in an unpredictable and unmanageable unjust world will drive people to defensively preserve the delusion that the world is a just place. In such a just world people deserve what they get, and, hence, get what they deserve. Applying this 'deservingness' strategy gives people a safe and secure feeling. It appears to have health-buffering functions, and, in that sense, may even be regarded as a coping strategy (e.g. Otto, Boos, Dalbert, Schöps, & Hoyer, 2006). The preservation of the belief in a just world can be established by applying either cognitive or behavioural strategies, or both. These strategies are all used to restore justice (Hafer & Bègue). Through the use of cognitive, victim-deservingness strategies (the blaming and/or derogating of innocent victims) people may attempt to deny or invalidate the injustice, brought upon the victim. The more rational, behavioural strategies refer to wishes for stronger penalties for violent offenders, attempts to help the victims, or attempts to find compensation or redress for these persons, their spouses and relatives. Experimental studies conducted by Hafer (2000) and Lodewijkx, DeKwaadsteniet, and van Zomeren et al. (2005), indeed, found evidence that people's just-world beliefs are activated, when being exposed to innocent victims of violence, who did not find just deserts. Accordingly, it can be expected that just-world beliefs may be involved in people's intentions to participate in silent marches, presumably in an effort to preserve or re-establish the belief that the world is a just place.

Punitive reactions

Regarding the punitive tendencies, Rucker, Polifroni, Tetlock, and Scott (2004; see also Carlsmith, Darley, & Robinson, 2005) distinguish two types of punitiveness: *deterrence* and *social retribution*. The motive for retribution 'reflect[s] deeply held beliefs about justice and the need to reaffirm those beliefs. Punishment based on retribution is driven by a desire to see individuals pay for what they have done and to pay their debt to society' (*ibid.*, p. 679). The motive for deterrence is concerned 'with deterring future threats rather than

making criminals atone for past atrocities' (*ibid.*). The wish for deterrence is associated with forward-looking, in that the offender is kept from future wrong-doings, for instance by discouraging transgressors from committing further violent acts. The wish for retribution is associated with backward-looking and is concerned 'with making sure norm violators pay for what they have done', for instance, 'to impose punishments that inflict pain equal to (or greater than) that suffered by the victim' (*ibid.*). In previous studies we found evidence that the wishes for justice retribution (Lodewijx, DeKwaadsteniet, & Nijstad, 2005; Lodewijx, DeKwaadsteniet, & van Zomeren et al., 2005) and deterrence (Lodewijx & van Zomeren, submitted) were involved, when people were exposed to victims of 'senseless' violence. Accordingly, these findings suggest that—besides just-world beliefs—offender-related punitive responses may also be related to people's participation intentions.

Person and position identification

One important, positive reason why people may choose to participate in silent marches against violence may be their identification with the victim. In their work on just-world theory, Lerner, Miller, and Holmes (1976) differentiated between person and position identification. The first refers to a unit relation between the observer and the victim. It involves an empathic identification with the victim, implying that one vicariously 'feels' the suffering of a victim. Position identification relates to a non-unit relation with the victim. It concerns a perceived (potential or future) fate similarity with the victim, that is, a transpersonal, objective understanding of the position a victim finds him/herself in ('That could be me'). The differences between the two types of identifications are: (a) that empathic person identification involves a vicarious emotional reaction to the victim, whereas position identification does not; and (b) that the former is *other-directed* and the latter is *self-directed*.

Van Zomeren and Lodewijx (2005) argued that the two different kinds of identification may present two different, underlying pathways to protest against violent incidents. In their experimental study they observed that participants' degree of position identification significantly mediated their personal initiatives to take action against such incidents ('I would like to prevent something like this from happening again'.), and also their wishes to support the victims and/or their relatives. ('I will attend the funeral'.) These initiatives and support intentions were more strongly fuelled by anger than by pity. Person identification, on the other hand, only mediated participants' intentions to support the victims, and these intentions were mainly fuelled by pity. We assume that these two different identification pathways to take action against violent incidents will also be present in the current study.

Distress and affiliation

In view of the frequency with which silent marches occur in The Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe, the assumption seems valid that violent incidents pose a threat to Dutch residents, leading to distress and discontent. Indeed, Wittebrood (2006) found evidence for this contention in The Netherlands. Therefore, we included the distress variable in our study. We expect that stronger distress reactions will be associated with stronger participation intentions.

The literature further indicates that distress, due to (perceived or real) threat, may induce an affiliate need among people. Schachter (1959) has shown that self-evaluative, social comparison processes underlie the need for affiliation. When facing threat or danger, people often do not know how to react or how to label their emotions, and therefore they turn towards others to reduce their emotional uncertainty. Additional research has shown that searches for cognitive and normative clarity are other important motives underlying the need to affiliate (e.g. Lodewijckx, van Zomeren, & Syroit, 2005). Applying this reasoning to violent incidents, we propose that the (perceived or real) threat, with concomitant distress reactions evoked by such incidents, may induce an affiliate need among Dutch residents, which will motivate them to seek others for reassurance through emotional, cognitive and normative clarity. Therefore, we propose that affiliate tendencies will also be positively related to the participation variable. This reasoning further implies that a positive relationship can be expected between distress and affiliation—the more distressed people are, the stronger their affiliate need will be triggered.

Research questions

The SVPM and moral mandate theory predict that—when perceiving moral threat—moral-punitive beliefs will be an important underlying dimension in people's participation intentions. Just-world beliefs and punitive reactions directed at offenders present means to restore justice in cases of violence, and engaging in silent marches may constitute ways to reach this aim. Distress and affiliate reactions will also be positively related to the participation intention variable. Finally, research by van Zomeren and Lodewijckx (2005) indicated the existence of two underlying pathways to protest, that either involve people's self-directed, position identification with the victim, or their other-directed, empathic person identification with the victim. We expect that such dual pathways to protest will also be present in people's willingness to take part in silent demonstrations.

METHOD

Design, procedure and participants

We conducted a survey among the residents of Heerlen (The Netherlands). We drew a sample ($N = 120$) from these residents and they were administered a questionnaire which was introduced as investigating the social climate and issues of crime and violence in The Netherlands. The questionnaire was randomly distributed in three neighbourhoods of the city, one lower-class, one middle-class and one upper-class (approximately $N = 40$, each). One female experimenter personally distributed the questionnaires and also personally collected them. When collecting the questionnaires, she requested participants whether they knew any persons in the neighbourhood, who would also be willing to fill out the questionnaire. If the answer was affirmative, she then personally solicited the questionnaire to these persons and personally collected it. In this way, we succeeded to recruit 120 individuals, who all volunteered to take part in the study. This number suffices to perform principal component and path analyses, with which we will examine our research questions. After completion, participants were personally debriefed and informed about the background and purpose of the study. They received no fee or gift in return for their participation.

Descriptive statistics indicate that we succeeded to draw a heterogeneous sample with sufficient variation on the socio-demographic variables. The sample consisted of 56 males (46.7%) and 64 females (53.3%), who for the largest part performed paid labour (85; 70.8%), with mean age of 34 years (range 16–76 years). Eighty two (68.3%) of the participants indicated that they were cohabitated or married, 29 (24.2%) were not married, while 9 (7.5%) were divorced. Seventy of the participants (58.3%) reported to have enjoyed higher education (high school and beyond). Sixty nine (57.5%) participants indicated to have no religious affiliation, 39 (32.2%) reported to be Catholics or Protestants and 12 (10.3%) reported other religious affiliations. Forty eight of the participants (40%) preferred the left-wing social-democratic parties (SP, PVDA, Groen Links); 32 (26.6%) preferred the liberal-democratic parties (VVD en D66) and 11 (9.2%) preferred the Christian-democratic party (CDA). Twenty nine (24.2%) participants reported no political preference.

Instruments

The theoretical variables were all operationalized using a 7-point Likert-type response format (1 = '*strongly disagree*'; 7 = '*strongly agree*'), unless indicated otherwise. Table 1 presents inter-correlations between the theoretical variables, means and *SDs*, and the reliability coefficients (on the diagonal). Cronbach's alpha coefficients indicate that all the variables are internally consistent. Various statistics, presented in Table 1, will be discussed in this and later sections. For all the variables, items were recoded (where required) and aggregated into composite measures. On all these measures higher ratings indicate stronger agreement.

Willingness to participate. This variable was measured by four items, for example 'If people were to organize a silent march in my region, I would certainly participate'.

Belief in a just world. Participants checked a translated version of the BJW-*self* scale (eight items) of Lipkus, Dalbert, and Siegler (1996). Items included for example: 'I feel... that I get what I am entitled to in life; that I get what I deserve; that I earn the rewards and punishments I get'.

Punitiveness. We partially derived these operationalizations from Rucker et al. (2004). Regarding *deterrence*, items included, for instance, the extent to which participants wished that 'offenders are discouraged from ever doing anything like this again' and the wish 'to prevent future occurrences of this crime'. To assess *justice retribution*, participants rated the extent to which 'offenders should be punished' (1 = '*very strongly*', 7 = '*very mildly*') and to which 'offenders deserved a long sentence' (1 = '*strongly agree*', 7 = '*strongly disagree*'); adopted from Lodewijx, DeKwaadsteniet, and van Zomeren et al. (2005, Study 1). We added one item, derived from Rucker et al., and participants rated 'to make sure that the offenders should pay their debt to society' (1 = '*strongly agree*', 7 = '*strongly disagree*'). Table 1 shows that the correlation between the two punitive reactions is $r = 0.69$ ($p \leq 0.001$).

Moral responses. *Moral outrage* was measured by four items, derived from Tetlock et al. (2000, Experiments 1 and 2): 'Suppose that an offender of a violent incident was caught and put to trial, but released due to procedural details. I would find that...disgusting, immoral, unjust'; and 'This would make me very angry'. *Moral*

Table 1. Means, SDs, reliability coefficients (on the diagonal) and inter-correlations between the theoretical variables ($N \leq 120$)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1 Willingness to participate	3.95	1.56	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2 Just-world beliefs	4.44	1.05	18*	81	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3 Justice retribution	5.83	0.95	37**	21*	60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4 Deterrence	6.38	0.94	33*	27**	69*	79	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 Moral outrage	5.90	1.25	35**	11	55**	45**	81	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6 Moral cleansing	3.97	1.63	49**	21*	35**	19*	29**	59	—	—	—	—	—	—
7 Person identification	4.55	1.35	55**	06	39**	41**	28**	25**	69	—	—	—	—	—
8 Position identification	4.88	1.71	48**	19*	44**	41**	42**	48**	38**	86	—	—	—	—
9 Personal distress	3.72	1.44	33**	-05	20*	12	33**	37**	35**	49**	73	—	—	—
10 Emotional empathy	4.99	0.97	40**	32**	39**	32**	30**	29**	30**	45**	13	73	—	—
11 Empathic guilt	5.38	1.12	41**	37**	31**	39**	34**	29**	36**	25**	08	62**	74	—
12 Social closeness	5.88	0.81	29**	49**	38**	45**	17	28**	17	26**	-04	44**	51**	67

* $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$ (two-tailed). Decimal points omitted.

cleansing was measured by three items, also partly derived from the Tetlock et al. studies. They followed the format and items by which we operationalized moral outrage. An example is: 'I would invest a lot of time and effort to improve the administration of justice in such cases; If one of the attorneys in that trial was a friend of mine, I would immediately break up the friendship'. Item-analyses revealed that one item did not contribute sufficiently to this scale ($r_{it} = 0.23$) and was therefore discarded. ('This type of administration of justice should be abolished'.) This resulted in two items to construct the moral cleansing scale, with moderate reliability ($\alpha = 0.59$). The two moral responses correlate positively ($r = 0.29$, $p \leq 0.05$), sharing 8.4% of common variance.

Identification. Participants rated five items, derived from the Lodewijkx, DeKwaadsteniet, and Nijstad (2005) and Lodewijkx, DeKwaadsteniet, and van Zomeren et al. (2005) studies. We assessed *person identification* by three items. One item tapped participants' degree of global identification with the victim: 'To what extent do you identify with victims of violent incidents'. The other two items measured participants' degree of empathy: 'When facing violent incidents . . . I personally empathize with the victims'; and . . . 'I feel involved with the suffering of the victims'. We assessed *position identification* with two items: 'When facing violent incidents, I feel . . . that this comes very close'; and . . . 'that this can also happen to me or my relatives'. The two identification scales correlate positively ($r = 0.38$, $p \leq 0.01$), with a common variance between the variables of 14.4%.

Personal distress. We measured this variable with three items, taken from the 'Interpersonal Reactions Questionnaire' (Batson et al., 1997): 'If I think about my own safeness in the Netherlands, this makes me feel . . . alarmed; upset; distressed'.

Affiliativeness. Participants ticked a translated version of the sociability/affiliativeness measure, developed by Rothbart, Ahadi, and Evans (2000) in their Adult Temperament Questionnaire (ATQ). The scale consists of 27 items with 7-point rating scales (1 = 'not true', 7 = 'very true'). Three subscales are distinguished: *emotional empathy*, described as the degree of affective response congruent with others; *empathic guilt*, defined as the propensity to experience distress in response to negatively affecting others and *social closeness*, described as the propensity to have feelings of warmth, closeness or involvement with others. An example of an item measuring emotional empathy (10 items): 'When I would see someone lying sleeping in the streets, this would upset me'; for empathic guilt (7 items): 'I would feel guilty if I thought I had hurt someone' and for social closeness (10 items): 'There are a number of people whom I care about a lot'. The three subscales correlate positively ($0.62 \leq r_s \leq 0.44$, $p_s \leq 0.01$). Observe that affiliativeness here is conceptualized as a state rather than a trait variable.

Further, note that the mean ratings of several dependent variables in Table 1 are quite extreme (i.e. justice retribution, deterrence, moral outrage, empathic guilt and social closeness), indicating the relevance of these variables for our participants when being exposed to the issue of crime and violence. Finally, regarding the expected positive relationships between the affiliativeness scales and the distress measure, they were all not significant ($r_s \leq 0.13$).

Data reduction and analyses

We performed PCA to examine the inter-relationships between the scales, presented above, and to reduce the data. We next tested our research questions by performing path analyses,

using AMOS 5.0, in which we examined the inter-relationships between the participation intention variable and the factors, extracted by the PCA.

RESULTS

PCA

Based on the inter-correlations between the scales, presented in Table 1, we can expect that the underlying factors will correlate with each other. Therefore we conducted PCA, using direct-oblimin rotation. The analyses extracted three factors with initial eigen values > 1 (see Table 2, for the extracted pattern matrix). According to the guidelines put forward by Field (2005), the determinant of the correlation matrix that served as input for the PCA, amounted to 0.015. This value exceeds the 0.00001-benchmark, indicating that there is no sign of multicollinearity amongst the variables. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy reached a 'good' value of 0.791, indicating that our sample size ($N = 120$) is appropriate for conducting PCA. Additionally, the separate KMO-indices for individual variables varied between $0.70 < \text{KMO} < 0.87$, all revealing good and sufficient sampling adequacy. The same conclusion holds when we look at Bartlett's test of sphericity, which appeared to be strongly significant $\chi^2 = 458.70$ ($df = 55$), $p < 0.001$. All these findings show that our sample size is sufficiently large to perform PCA and that the data-quality is also sufficient to perform such an analysis, allowing the extraction of relatively stable factors.

Returning to the extracted factors, on the first factor the punitive scales (deterrence and justice retribution) and the moral outrage scale show high and significant loadings. Intriguingly, the empathic person identification scale also loads significantly on this factor. This factor can thus be labelled an *other-directed, moral outrage/punitive factor*. The second factor shows relationships between the scales that measure the affiliate tendency, which appear to be positively related to just-world beliefs. Hence, we labelled this factor *affiliate just-world beliefs*. Finally, we labelled the third factor a *self-directed, moral cleansing factor*, which includes the scales measuring position identification, moral cleansing and distress.

These findings yield some intriguing results. Firstly, the other-directed moral outrage/punitive factor appears to represent 'empathic anger', a concept distinguished by Hoffman (1987; see also Vitaglione & Barnett, 2003; and the Discussion section). Secondly, the findings show evidence for the 'dual identification pathways to protest' model, as proposed by van Zomeren and Lodewijkx (2005). That is, two of the three factors appear to revolve around the different roles of person and position identification in relation to the more angry moral outrage response and the more fearful moral cleansing response, respectively.

Path analyses

Next, we examined the inter-relationships of these factors with the participation intention variable. In preliminary analyses we included the demographic variables as control variables. These analyses produced only one marginally significant, negative relationship between marital status and the dependent variable ($\beta = -0.19$, $p = 0.07$). Married and/or cohabitated participants tend to engage in silent marches somewhat more than single

Table 2. Summarized results of PCA

Variable	Factor 1: other-directed, moral outrage/ punitive factor	Factor 2: affiliate, just-world beliefs	Factor 3: self-directed, moral cleansing factor
Deterrence	90*	—	—
Justice retribution	85*	—	—
Moral outrage	61*	—	—
Person identification	60*	—	—
Social closeness	—	−78*	—
Just-world beliefs	—	−77*	—
Empathic guilt	—	−71*	—
Empathy	—	−65*	—
Distress	—	—	82*
Moral cleansing	—	—	74*
Position identification	—	—	64*
Initial eigen values	4.29	1.66	1.05
Variance after rotation (%)	39.04	19.10	9.53
Eigen values after rotation	3.40	2.93	2.48

Notes: Decimal points and loadings < 40 omitted. Direct-oblimin rotation method was used. The pattern matrix is presented.
*All loadings $p \leq 0.05$.

participants. On the basis of these preliminary findings, we did not include the demographic variables as control variables in follow-up analyses.

The findings of these latter analyses are summarized in the model, depicted in Figure 1. In this model only the other-directed moral outrage/punitive and the affiliate just-world factor showed a common residual error variance ($\beta = 0.65$, $p < 0.001$), and none of the other variables. The recursive model revealed a satisfactory fit to the data. Adequate fit is

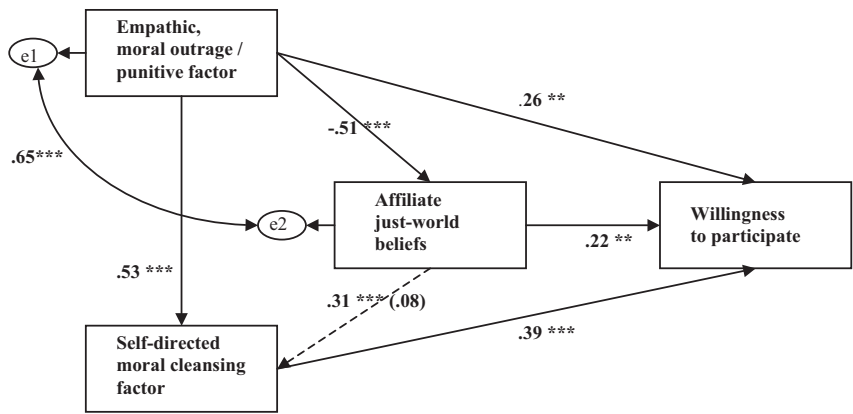


Figure 1. Results of path analyses. Note: Standardized regression weights. Broken arrows indicate mediated relationships; e1 and e2 indicate residual error variances. ** $p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$.

indicated when the χ^2/df ratio is below 2. As to the current model, the value of χ^2 was 0.72 with $df = 1$, indicating that the ratio fell below the 2-benchmark (i.e. 0.72). Both central and residual fit indices substantiate the evaluation of the model fit as satisfactory by, respectively, achieving a desired value $CFI > 0.90$ ($CFI = 1.00$), and by achieving a desired RMSEA value < 0.08 ($RMSEA = 0.00$). Of course, when looking at Figure 1, the model appears nearly fully saturated (i.e. nearly all the possible paths between the variables are drawn). This could be the reason why the model shows satisfactory fit to the data. However, such models do not imply that—therefore—all the relationships are significant and that the direction of these relationships would make sense theoretically. Moreover, as will be shown below, when reversing the direction of some of the relationships in the model—holding all the other relationships constant—this will strongly reduce the statistical fit of the model.

Direct effects. As expected in our research questions, Figure 1 shows that all the three factors significantly and positively relate to the participation intention variable ($R^2 = 0.469$, $p < 0.001$). This is true for the self-directed moral cleansing factor ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$), which, relatively speaking, explains most of the variation in the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0.355$). In a similar vein, the other-directed moral outrage/punitive factor ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.01$) and the affiliate just-world factor ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.01$), also show positive relationships with the dependent variable.

Indirect effects. Figure 1 further reveals some other conspicuous findings, which all relate to the relevance of the other-directed moral outrage/punitive factor in our participants' responses. The analysis not only yielded a direct positive relationship of this variable with the willingness to participate variable, but also two indirect relationships—either through affiliate just-world beliefs ($\beta = -0.51$, $p < 0.001$), or through self-directed moral cleansing responses ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < 0.001$).

As to the first indirect pathway, the negative regression weight obtained here, indicates that stronger other-directed moral outrage/punitive responses are associated with lowered beliefs that the world is a just place and with lowered affiliativeness. In turn, however, stronger affiliate just-world beliefs are positively related to people's participation intentions. When reversing this single path in the model—from affiliate just-world beliefs to the moral outrage/punitive factor, holding all the other relationships constant—this strongly reduced the statistical fit of the model (χ^2/df ratio = 7.89, $CFI = 0.896$, $RMSEA = 0.243$).

Regarding the second indirect pathway, the other-directed moral outrage/punitive reactions are positively related to the self-directed moral cleansing reactions ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < 0.001$), and not the other way around. When reversing this path in the model, this also strongly reduced the fit of the model (χ^2/df ratio = 23.41, $CFI = 0.832$, $RMSEA = 0.438$). Noteworthy, the relationship between affiliate just-world beliefs and the self-directed moral cleansing response was significant in previously tested models, $\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$. However, this relationship was partialled out when adding the path between the moral outrage/punitive factor and the self-directed moral cleansing factor in the model, resulting in a non-significant regression weight for the former relationship ($\beta = 0.08$, $p < 0.40$). This mediation effect is significant ($t = 3.75$, $p < 0.01$ by Sobel-test). This means that the variation in the self-directed moral cleansing response, accounted for by affiliate just-world beliefs, can be attributed to the other-directed moral outrage/punitive response. The finding again elucidates the centrality of the latter variable in our participants' reactions to crime and violence, including their participation intentions.

DISCUSSION

Willingness to participate

The silent marches against violent incidents that were held in The Netherlands and—more recently—in Belgium, often involved offenders, who, for no apparent reason, murdered innocent victims. As proposed by the SVPM, some of these incidents, can indeed, be conceived as examples in which there were trade-offs between sacred and secular values, such as killing someone for an mp3-player as recently happened in Brussels. More often, however, there is a lack of any apparent, ulterior, secular motives on the part of the offenders. To name but a few examples: In The Netherlands innocent victims were killed because they made some remarks about the offender's irresponsible driving behaviour (Rene Steegman in Venlo); about the offender's anti-social behaviour (Meindert Tjoelker in Leeuwarden) or because they inadvertently stood in the offender's way (Marianne Roza and Froukje Schuitmaker in Gorinchem).

Consistent with Baumeister, Bushman, and Campbell (2000) we propose that the frustration of narcissistic tendencies—that is, self-esteem that is based upon the conviction that one is superior to others—is an important determinant of the impulsive-aggressive outbursts of the (often relatively young) perpetrators in cases of 'senseless' violence. We argue that the trade-offs in such cases consist of transgressions of sacred values for egotistic, narcissistic motives. As predicted by the SVPM and moral mandate theory, our general findings suggest that people's reactions to such perceived 'senseless' transgressions are to resort to moralist-punitive beliefs to cognitively cope with such situations. These beliefs may eventually propel people to take part in protests against such incidents.

Relating to these participation intentions, our findings further revealed the existence of three underlying factors that are significantly related to this variable: an other-directed moral outrage/punitive factor; a self-directed moral cleansing factor and an affiliate just-world factor. As expected, all the three factors are positively associated with people's participation intentions. Admittedly, these findings only involve participants' intentions to engage in silent demonstrations, not to the fact that they actually would take part. This constitutes a shortcoming of the present study. Thus, one should be very cautious to generalize from these intentions to actual behaviour. However, it is comforting to know that research has also shown that intentions to protest do predict actual protest behaviour (e.g. De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999). Despite this shortcoming, our findings further showed an intriguing pattern of relationships which may substantiate the processes put forward in the SVPM and moral mandate theory. This pattern refers to the role of differential identification processes with the victim and their inter-relationships with moral outrage and moral cleansing responses.

Identification: dual pathways to protest?

As proposed by van Zomeren and Lodewijx (2005), our findings can perhaps best be represented by two underlying dimensions that constitute dual pathways to protest: an other-directed and a self-directed dimension. Intriguingly, the other-directed pathway reveals an association between victim-related empathic concerns, outrage and offender-related punitive reactions. Perhaps our measure of empathic person identification does not tap the assumed vicarious emotional reaction to the victim, as we defined this

concept on the basis of Lerner et al.'s (1976) analysis. Perhaps this measure is more indicative of what Staub (1987) labelled '*reactive empathy*'. With this reaction, one more strongly acts in response to the predicament of the victim and not so much to his or her emotional state. Related to this, Hoffman (1987) developed the term '*empathic anger*'. If a person attributes the cause of a victim's suffering to another person (such as, for instance, an offender in a violent incident), then that person may experience anger at the offender on behalf of the victim. In this sense empathic anger can perhaps best be conceived as 'vicarious' anger. Vitaglione and Barnett (2003) have shown that such angry empathic reactions increase the likelihood that individuals will engage in helping as well as punishing behaviours. Accordingly, the relationships we found between the variables that present the other-directed moral outrage/punitive factor are consistent with this research. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that this factor measures empathic anger. As our findings further revealed this factor appears to be central in people's reactions to issues of crime and violence. This variable not only constitutes a *direct* pathway for people to engage in protest against violent incidents, but is also involved in two indirect pathways. That is, empathic anger indirectly influences people's participation intentions, either through affiliate just-world beliefs, or through self-directed moral cleansing reactions.

Regarding the latter reactions, our findings showed that the empathic anger response is positively associated with the self-directed moral cleansing response, and not the other way around. This means that empathic anger also instigates people to take part in protest, presumably in an effort to (re-)affirm the community-shared moral standards through moral cleansing. Note that personal distress—and not outrage—is associated with this value affirmation factor. On these grounds it can be argued that, in first instance, the self-directed moral cleansing pathway is fuelled more strongly by moral anger. In second instance, however, it is fuelled by fear. The same factor is also associated with the idea that one could just as likely have been in the victim's position ('That could be me'). In other words, if the self becomes implicated in violent events, or if issues of violence become self-relevant, value affirming moral cleansing responses might become relatively more important than moral outrage/punitive responses. As our findings show such self-serving, distress responses may also urge people to take overt action against violent incidents, perhaps not for the benefit of others, but more for themselves.

Just-world beliefs

The second indirect pathway involves the relationship between empathic anger and affiliate just-world beliefs. This relationship is negative, suggesting that stronger empathic angry reactions are associated with beliefs that the world is *not* a just place, and also with lowered feelings of affiliativeness. In turn, stronger affiliate just-world beliefs are related to stronger intentions to participate in silent marches. Presumably, one reason for people to engage in such marches might thus be the preservation and/or re-establishment of the belief in a just world.

We further note that we found no relationships between the distress measure on one hand and just-world beliefs and the three affiliativeness scales on the other hand. To the best of our knowledge, the positive relationship between just-world beliefs and affiliate tendencies has never been reported (see for instance Furnham, 2003, for a recent review). One possible explanation for our findings is presented by Otto et al. (2006), who concluded that personal just-world beliefs may serve as a buffer against the negative consequences of an unjust fate

(people suffering from floods in their region) and that these beliefs may have a reassuring function. This very same buffering mechanism might explain the pattern of relationships we have observed here. When endorsing the just-world belief system, the feelings of connectedness with others may perhaps help people to defensively preserve the delusion that the world is a just place, lowering personal distress. Admittedly, however, our study does not allow us to draw any 'causal' relationships between these variables, that is, whether just-world beliefs activate affiliate tendencies, or *vice versa*; or whether the just-world preservation tendency leads to lowered distress levels and stronger participation intentions in cases where people are exposed to violent incidents. Future research should address all these (causal) relationships in more detail.

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